

**GRASSLAND RESERVE PROGRAM
SCORING WORKSHEET**

Participant: _____ Tract no. _____

Land being offered is privately owned and is currently being utilized as grass forage or meets the definition of eligible lands and is 40 contiguous acres or larger in size. Yes ____ No ____
If no, the application will be a lower priority for FY 2003 and will not be score.

EXCEPTION:

Existing grazing operations consisting of at least 25 – 39 contiguous acres of eligible land are eligible if they also have at least 20 animal units (AU) currently utilizing the forage.

Evaluation Criteria

Circle the correct point value for each criteria

I. <u>Threats to Conversion</u>		
<u>Criteria</u>		<u>Points</u>
A. Potential to be converted from grassland to urban land		
<u>High potential</u> Land is located in one of the listed counties: Carver, Hennepin, Anoka, Washington, Dakota, Ramsey		15
<u>Medium potential</u> : Land is located in one of the listed counties: Wright, Wadena, Jackson, Mower, Becker, Stearns, Lake of the Woods, Lake, Mille Lacs, Meeker, Sibley, Chisago, Benton, Freeborn, Rice, Sherburne, Brown, Olmsted, Scott, Cass		10
<u>Low potential</u> : Land is located in one of the listed counties: Aitkin, Beltrami, Big Stone, Blue Earth, Carlton, Chippewa, Clay, Clearwater, Cook, Cottonwood, Dodge, Douglas, Faribault, Fillmore, Grant, Houston, Hubbard, Itasca, Kittson, Koochiching, Lincoln, Lyon, Mahnomen, Marshall, Martin, Morrison, Nicollet, Norman, Otter Tail, Pennington, Pine, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Roseau, St. Louis, Steele, Swift, Traverse, Wabasha, Watsonwan, Wilkin, Yellow Medicine, Goodhue, Red Lake, Lac qui Parle, Crow Wing, Todd, Polk, Murray, Winona, McLeod, Nobles, Kandiyohi, Waseca, Isanti, Pope, Stevens, Kanabec, Le Sueur		5
<u>Adjust the points</u> awarded for conversion to urban lands no more then one category upwards (low to medium or medium to high) if local documented knowledge exists to justify the conversion threat. Threats to conversion may consider local development pressures including, housing, mining, utilities, and others. This adjustment must be documented in an explanation attached to this scoring sheet.		
Final adjusted total points due to local development concerns (award one score for Factor A, with a maximum of 15 points total, do not add these points with those above)	15	10 5
B. Potential to be converted from grassland to cropland		
50% or greater of the offered acres are in Land Capability Class 1 and 2		20
50% or greater of the offered acres are in Land Capability Class 3, 4, 6, 7, 8		10

C. Potential for accepted offers to be converted and/or require additional operation and maintenance due to Invasive Species

Area offered is located in the Tallgrass Prairie area	20
Area offered is located in the Transition area	10
Area offered is in the Forested Area	5

II. Non Conversion Considerations

A. Area offered is part of an Existing Grazing Operation

Managed Grazing	20
Continuous Grazing	10
No Grazing	0

B. Existing vegetation on area offered (biodiversity)

Native grass or prairie remnant or plant community of high or outstanding quality based on the Natural Heritage Database	15
Native grass that has been planted or restored	10
Mixed stand of at least 4 species of introduced grass and legumes	5
All other offers	0

C. Federal or State Threatened, Endangered or Species of Special Concern

Plants listed on the Natural Heritage Database are found on the site	5
Animals listed on the Natural Heritage Database are found within 1 mile of the site (maximum of 10 points total for this factor).	5
All other offers	0

D. Location Significance - area offered is within one mile of another open land protected area that is managed with the same goals as GRP and is:

> 200 acres in size	3
100 – 200 acres in size	2
40 – 100 acres	1
All other offers	0

E. Water Quality Benefits

Area offered includes or is immediately adjacent to a perennial stream	2
Area offered is within ½ mile of a perennial stream	1
All other offers	0

Total Points – Section I (0-55) _____

Total Points – Section II (0-45) _____

TOTAL POINTS FOR OFFER _____

If a tie breaker is required offers will be grouped by type (easement or agreement) and the offer with the least cost per acre will be ranked higher.

The following information is not used in the scoring but will be needed for approval purposes:

Type of GRP agreement offered (check one):

Rental Agreement ____ 10 year ____ 15 year ____ 20 year ____ 30 year
Easement ____ 30 year ____ Permanent

Total Acres Offered _____

Enter to nearest whole dollar

Estimated total cost of rental agreement \$ _____ (Annual rental rate x total acres x length of contract)

Estimated total cost of easement \$ _____ (Estimated easement cost x total acres)

Guidance for Ranking Criteria

Conversion Considerations

The GRP Notice of Fund Availability requires that at least 55 percent of the points in the ranking system be awarded for the risk or potential for conversion from grassland to other uses. **Contiguous acres – On a tract basis** - acres are considered to be contiguous if the grasslands are capable of being utilized by livestock on the entire tract regardless of existing fences, landuses or current management. This means that the acres do not need to be physically connected. **On a multiple tract basis** - When grassland acres will be offered on multiple tracts the offered acreage on the tracts must be physically connected together to be eligible.

IA. Threat to conversion to urban land: Points were assigned based on the counties that had the greatest percent of grassland converted to urban land use from 1982-1997, as identified in the 1997 NRI. Points are adjusted upward, no more than one category, based on a locally documented threat of conversion due to development. Attach a brief explanation for adjusting the points awarded in this category upward.

IB. Threat to conversion to cropland: Points under this category are assigned based on the classification of the predominant soil map units being converted to cropland. Land in capability classes 1 and 2 could be converted to cropland with minimal land treatment costs. These classifications can be found in Section 2 of the Field Office Technical Guide, which is available on line at www.mn.usda.gov.

IC. Threat to accepted offers being converted or requiring additional operation and maintenance due to invasive woody species. Score points for this factor based on the attached map.

Total points for the scoring factors Section I can not exceed 55 points.

Non Conversion Considerations

IIA. A grazing operation is defined as one that has livestock and/or animals which utilize the forage and where significant agricultural income is derived from the grazing operation. Small hobby farms and those operations with insignificant animal numbers (less than 10 animal units) will not be considered as a grazing operation.

IIC. Federal or State Threatened, Endangered or Species of Special concern: The Natural Heritage Database will be used to determine points for this category. Assign these points when the area offered is a known habitat (on site for plants and within one mile for animals) for at-risk species. The conservation plan will address habitat requirements for the identified animal or plant.

IID. Location significance: Protected areas for assigning these points are defined as: 1) public lands, such as refuges and wildlife management areas that are managed for an open landscape; 2) private lands that are under a permanent conservation easement such as WRP, CREP, RIM and are managed for an open landscape. Land enrolled in limited duration conservation programs and that is not under a permanent easement, does not qualify as protected areas under this category.

IIE. Offers that include or that are immediately adjacent or within ½ mile of a perennial stream receive additional points. Perennial streams are identified using the USGS topographic maps.

Total points for section II (non-conversion considerations) cannot exceed 45 points.